

**Subject:** Good News from LADBS featuring Development Reform

**From:** "Bud Ovrom" <LADBS.Newsletter@lacity.org>

**Date:** 08/23/2011 11:14 AM

**To:** "duckworth.donald@gmail.com" <duckworth.donald@gmail.com>



**Volume II, Issue 2,  
August 2011**

Also available on the Web at  
[www.ladbs.org](http://www.ladbs.org)

**Special Points of Interest**

*For general information and  
inspection requests, please call  
3-1-1.*

*Click here for a copy of our  
[2010 Performance  
Enhancement Program](#)*

**Inside This Issue**

[Development Services  
Collaborative](#)

[Development Services  
Cabinet](#)

[Development Services Case  
Management](#)

[Construction Liaison Network](#)

[Land Development Committee](#)

[One-Stop Counters](#)

[Development Industry  
Advisory Committee](#)

[PlanCheckNC](#)

**LADBS Construction  
Service Centers**

## Message from the General Manager



**Monthly Statistics**

Last fiscal year was a roller coaster for new construction, with six months higher and six months lower than in the previous year!

For the first month of the new year, we are off to another bumpy ride! Building Permit Valuation for new construction was down 42% and new housing starts were down a whopping 87% from last July.



Plan Check Revenue, our best indicator of future construction, was 54% better than July of last year, so we do expect better months ahead. Stay tuned.

#### **Downtown**

201 N. Figueroa Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(Figueroa Plaza)

#### **West Los Angeles**

1828 Sawtelle Blvd.  
2nd Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

#### **South LA**

8475 S. Vermont Ave.  
2nd Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90044

#### **Van Nuys**

6262 Van Nuys Blvd.  
2nd Floor, Room 251  
Los Angeles, CA 91401

#### **San Pedro**

638 S. Beacon Street  
Room 276  
San Pedro, CA 90731

#### **Counter Hours:**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,  
Friday: 7:30 am - 4:30 pm  
Wednesday: 9:00 am - 4:30  
pm

\* San Pedro & South LA  
offices are closed between  
noon - 1:00 pm daily

For Information you call:  
3-1-1 (Inside LA City) or  
(213) 473-3231 (Outside  
LA City)

### **Development Reform**

Earlier this year Mayor Villaraigosa directed staff to significantly increase the priority being placed on development reform. The Mayor insisted that this new effort focus on tangible implementation and not be another report to be put on a shelf and collect dust!

To help achieve this end, the City retained the KH Consulting Group, along with Woolpert, Inc. as a subcontractor, to work closely with City staff, our customers, community organizations, professional associations and the City Council to develop a **Development Reform Strategic Plan**.

The Plan was completed in July and will be available on our website next month at [www.ladbs.org](http://www.ladbs.org), click on Development Reform.

Because of the Mayor's insistence on results rather than just concepts, there was no fanfare to announce the completion of the Strategic Plan itself. Instead, the "fanfare" will come as each significant component is actually implemented. We want to be judged by our actions, not just our words.

The first element to be put into action is the City's new **Development Service Case Management Office**, which the Mayor personally inaugurated on July 12, 2011.



Front Row (Left to Right): Gary Toeppen, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Carol Schatz, Councilman Ed Reyes, Brad Cox, Bud Ovrom, and Gary Lee Moore

This Case Management Office, which will be described in greater detail in the following section, represents the most significant development reform implemented in the City since the Construction Services Centers/One-Stop counters were initiated in the 1980's.

Moreover, as illustrated by the chart below, the case management team will be supported by additional services up and down the chain of command to form a comprehensive system for processing

projects.

Taken together, these various services are now known as the **Development Services Collaborative**.

Other elements of the Development Reform Strategic Plan, such as comprehensive revisions of the Zoning Code, updating the Community Plans, improving the environmental review process and expanding the use of technology, will be implemented and announced in the future.

Development Reform is no longer just a dream. With the establishment of the Development Service Collaborative and the opening of the Case Management Office, tangible implementation of development reform has begun!

---

## Development Services Collaborative

### *Development Services Cabinet*

Mayor Villaraigosa has emphasized the need for departments to work cooperatively to improve delivery of development services. To turn that management principle into an operating practice, the Mayor has established the **Development Services Cabinet**.

The Development Services Cabinet is chaired by the Deputy Mayor for Economic and Business Policy or his/her designee, and consists of the General Managers of the core departments that oversee the major development review processes - - Planning (DCP), Building and Safety (LADBS), Engineering (BOE), Transportation (DOT), Water and Power (DWP), Fire (LAFD) and the Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Additionally, other Departments involved with land development will send representatives to the Cabinet meetings as needed.



The Development Services Cabinet meets at least once a month and is held accountable not only for the implementation of the Mayor's development reform proposal, but also for the on-going operations of these development related departments.

Under the executive leadership of the Mayor's Office, the establishment of the Development Services Cabinet institutionalizes development reform within the operating departments.

### ***Development Services Case Management***

The heart of the City's new approach to processing development projects is the establishment of the **Development Services Case Management Office (CMO)**. This office helps customers navigate projects through the City's development review process. The CMO is comprised of dedicated Case Managers representing five key departments: Planning, Building and Safety, Bureau of Engineering, Water & Power, and Transportation. These departments oversee the City's

major review processes: entitlements, permitting, public/offsite improvements, and utility design.

For the first time, Case Managers from all five of these departments have been co-located in a single office on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of 201 N. Figueroa Street: six from LADBS, five from Planning, and one each from BOE, LADWP, and DOT.

Case Managers from these key departments – with the necessary skills and authority to act – are available to create an efficient, accountable, collaborative environment amongst the departments, resulting in far better customer service. Case Managers will represent their department but act as one team - - the City's team. An LADBS Case Manager, Lincoln Lee, has been designated the captain of this new all-star team.



Left to Right: Case Managers Lincoln Lee, Joe Vo, Daniel Ahadian, Estineh Mailian, Vanessa Soto, Charmie Huynh, Jack Chiang, and Jameson Lee

The Citywide Case Management team partners with the applicant and guides them through every step of the City's process. From project conception to completion, the Case Management Team negotiates, assists with code and policy compliance, and resolves any conflicts that may arise along the way. The CMO ensures an efficient, transparent, predictable process, resulting in high-quality development that addresses community needs and improves the quality of life in Los Angeles.

### ***Construction Liaison Network***

For Planning and LADBS, land use issues and real estate development are their core business. For other Departments, facilitating new construction is important, but represents a small percentage of their primary responsibilities.

For these other departments, we have created the **Construction Liaison Network** – a designated “go to” person(s) in each department or bureau. For decisions on such items as street trees, sewer connections, street lights, etc., you do not need a person every day, but when you need them, you really need them!

The Construction Liaison Network will provide the Citywide Case Management Office with necessary support from all City Departments.

### ***Land Development Committee***

For the majority of projects, the Development Services Case Managers will be able to resolve most problems or conflicts.

To resolve any difference between departments that may arise, the Mayor has established the new **Land Development Committee**.

The Land Development committee will be staffed by Assistant General Managers or senior managers with decision-making authority. The Committee will meet at least once a month to ensure no dispute goes unresolved for more than four weeks. The Land Development Committee will be chaired by the Planning Department, to ensure that all development decisions are made in accordance with good planning principles and that new development aspires to improve the City.

### ***One-Stop Counters***

The vast majority of building permits issued by the City each year are for smaller projects and done “over the counter” without the need for Case Management, the Construction Liaison Network, or the Land Development Committee. To ensure Development Reform benefits all residents of Los Angeles, it must also improve the process for these smaller projects as well.

Since 1984 the City has operated five Construction Service Centers, or “One-Stop Counters”, in Downtown, Van Nuys, West LA, South LA, and San Pedro. To guarantee consistent service at the City’s “**One-Stop Counters**”, DCP has reassigned experienced planners to staff the two full-service **Construction Service Centers** in **Downtown** and **Van Nuys**. The reallocation of staff resources will increase the depth of knowledge and experience at the public counters. By doing so, customers will now be able to receive better information and resolve more complex issues at the Construction Service Centers, saving trips to City Hall and preventing delays.

### ***Development Industry Advisory Committee***

One of the points Mayor Villaraigosa insisted on with this new generation of development reform was that it must not simply be city staff talking to city staff. It is critically important to listen to our customers – big and small.

During the development reform strategic planning phase, the Mayor established the Development Reform Advisory Committee (DRAC). To ensure on-going private sector involvement, the Mayor has directed that such an industry group should continue and has formally designated it the **Development Industry Advisory Committee (DIAC)**. The Committee consists of 11 members who are selected to represent small and large developers, commercial and residential builders,

architects, engineers, transportation specialists, land use lawyers and consultants.

DIAC meets once a month to provide private sector input on all development-related issues and serves as a sounding board for process improvement proposals.

### ***PlanCheckNC***

**PlanCheckNC** is an existing grassroots alliance created by Neighborhood Council stakeholders from across the City to promote greater public participation in planning and land use issues and make government more responsive to local community needs.

PlanCheckNC members include representatives from Neighborhood Councils across the City. Community perspective and input is as important as the development industry's perspective and advice. To ensure the involvement of community stakeholders, the City will regularly share updates and seek input from PlanCheckNC as implementation progresses. Additionally, when the City shares development reform updates with PlanCheckNC, homeowner associations, community leaders, and representatives of similar organizations will be invited and encouraged to attend.





---

## Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Building and Safety is to protect the lives and safety of the residents and visitors of the City of Los Angeles and enhance the quality of life, housing, economic prosperity, and job creation. This is accomplished through advising, guiding, and assisting customers to achieve compliance with the Building, Zoning, Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical, Disabled Access, Energy, and Green Codes; and local and State laws, through a timely, ethical, cooperative, and transparent process for the facilitation of construction and maintenance of commercial, industrial, and residential buildings throughout the City.

To add your e-mail to our distribution list, please [click here](#).

To remove your e-mail from our distribution list, please see below.

Past editions of our newsletter are available on our [website](#).

We want your feedback! Please [click here](#) to submit your comments and/or suggestions.

**LADBS Newsletter Editors: David Lara & Celeste Morris**

This message was sent to duckworth.donald@gmail.com by:

**City of Los Angeles**  
**Department of Building & Safety**  
201 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1000  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 482-6800

